

645 He was a student of Ngoni history and custom, and used his travels as treasurer to collect new information. He always intended to write a history of the central kingdom as Chumbo had done for the northern kingdom, but his public duties never gave him time.

645 In making contact with his people and keeping in touch with his officials the Paramount did not rely only on their visits to the royal village. Two or three times a year he toured his kingdom, accompanied by his *alomo amahuni* and the treasurer, and stayed at the head villages of the chiefs and also of other *alomo*. The treasurer spoke enthusiastically of the Paramount's habit of making himself known to his people and enabling them to present petitions to him in person. He met village headmen on their own ground, and *alomo* who were unconsciously directing the affairs of their villages and areas, as well as the official chiefs or Subordinate Native Authorities. He saw for himself how his own regulations were being carried out and how the measures for agricultural improvement and cattle-dipping which the Government was promoting were being adopted. These visits in his own territory were followed by visits to Mlatyze and Zomba and to the mining centres outside the country where his people were working. He was thus able to check on the conditions in the subordinate chiefs' areas which had been created by the prolonged absence of men from the villages.

The Paramount and changes in law and custom

643 Through his school education at Mlatyze, his membership of a Christian church, and through attending the chiefs' course at the Jeanes School in Zomba, the Paramount stood between the old and the new in the changing conditions in his kingdom. After the 1933 Ordinance one of the changes in administration was that a Native Authority had to budget for income and expenditure in his area. The income for 1935 for this area was £999, made up of a share of the taxes; fifty per cent. of the yearly rental of stores; court fines and fees and beer licences. The expenditure was £832, under items of salaries to the Paramount and subordinate chiefs; salaries for messengers, councillors, clerks and policemen; payment of fourpence per tax to the headmen of the villages so that it was to their advantage to collect the full amount; and a small sum for uniforms, office expenses and such items as cash boxes and handcuffs. This budget for the central Ngoni kingdom was drawn up in consultation with the District Officer by the Paramount and his treasurer. It was a source of great pride to the treasurer that he had, as we have seen, his own key to a safe in the District Office where he put the tax money collected in the area, and drew out sums needed for expenditure in the Paramount's office.

744 In 1933, as already mentioned, a meeting of subordinate chiefs, *alomo* and headmen heard the Paramount's proposals for new regulations about village improvement and agreed to them. These regulations were

CHILDREN OF THEIR FATHERS

648 Africa. All males had to pay taxes to the government, at
 177 first in kind and later in cash, thus hastening the advent of a
 451 money economy. Most drastic of all the changes was the ban
 434 on warfare, which cut at the roots of Ngoni political organi-
 721 zation, and at their system of training their young men.

182 In the Northern Ngoni kingdom, the Scottish Mission
 797 preceded the administration by more than twenty years, and
 648 were largely responsible for a peaceful take-over of the area.
 184 In the Central kingdom there was a brief war of resistance,
 in which the Ngoni armies were dispersed and the Para-
 mount killed on his way to trial. In this area mission activity,
 under several missions, never achieved, especially in educa-
 tion, the ascendancy which the Scottish Mission achieved
 among the Ngoni in the North.

- 178 As one result of the cessation of warfare, and of school
- 434 education leading to paid employment, there was an econo-
- 556 mic redistribution of wealth among the Ngoni. Formerly
- [661] wealth had been associated with political power, and the
- Paramounts and their subordinate chiefs and heads of clans
- had command of large herds of cattle, received the spoils
- from wars and raids, and used the labour of conquered
- villages to cultivate the land. After the missions and govern-
- [871] ment were established, men with schooling began to earn
- money as teachers, clerks and mechanics, and so to command
- financial resources which were not available to the traditional
- leaders. The young men responded to the labour recruitment
- [464] which became a permanent feature in Nyasaland from the
- 1890s, and they went far afield to many types of work.

178 It was evident, just before World War II, that the Ngoni
 184 kingdoms had had a profound shock from which they never
 561 fully recovered, in spite of the recognition of their Para-
 648 mount Chief by the Native Authorities Ordinance in 1934.
 The older men looked back with nostalgia to what they
 called 'the time of peace, when the Europeans were not here
 to trouble us'. These older men were known as 'the genera-
 tion of former days', because they had taken part in warfare

CHILDREN OF THEIR FATHERS

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CHILDREN OF THEIR FATHERS

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[434]
[571] German in charge of gangs of workers. All this last group involved the earning, spending and sharing of money incomes, but even more important in Ngoni eyes, they offered opportunities of exercising authority, and of controlling and directing others.

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693 In local government and in the courts, which formed an integral part of it, the qualities demanded were wisdom, ability to make decisions, expert knowledge of the law, skill in conducting cases and in summing up evidence, and knowledge of the people, so that their reactions to new measures and to difficult court decisions could be forecast. Certain women were thought of as inheriting this kind of judicial ability and were often turned to in private by their husbands, sons or brothers and asked to declare themselves in support of or against an important decision and to discuss its merits or demerits.

[827]
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622 In choosing a successor to a chief the regents who were responsible for the selection looked for particular qualities of individual character as well as for evidence of the ideal Ngoni personality traits. Men who by right of inheritance could have succeeded their father were sometimes passed over because they showed characteristics which would make them a bad chief. This was one of the reasons why sons of leading men were watched so closely and corrected so sharply by the elders of a village who were noting their adjustment to the basic personality pattern as well as their individual character.

There were certain acknowledged ritual activities which demanded of the performer both a high degree of conformity to Ngoni personality patterns and special individual characteristics. On the death of a chief one of his sons or brothers was designated to become head of the 'elder' village which remained behind, when the new chief with some of the members of his father's 'house' moved out to found a new village. The 'one who stayed behind' as he was called was expected to be the epitome of all Ngoni qualities, and to have a good memory for, and an understanding of, Ngoni tradi-

Mpeseni

La-mba FOS

Maravi FRJ

AFRICAN LAND USAGE

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In demarcating the Reserves three assumptions were made; that populations would prove sufficiently fluid to adapt themselves to the altered circumstances and to attain an equitable distribution in relation to the available land, that artificial water supplies would be provided on a scale sufficient to allow of such a distribution and that improvement in methods of agriculture would be sufficiently rapid to compensate for land loss and to provide for increasing populations. However reasonable these assumptions may have been at the time, none has been verified by events. The boundaries of tribes and chiefdoms remained static, there was little or no migration from over-populated to under-populated areas and in one instance congestion was aggravated by immigration from outside the Territory. The systems of land usage tended to degenerate rather than to improve, partly owing to increasing pressure on the land and partly because of migration of the men to the centres of employment. It was assumed too that adequate agricultural and water development services would be provided, and it proved beyond the resources of the country to provide such services in time to meet the need.

As a result of these factors, some of which could not have been foreseen owing to the lack of adequate data at the time, and some of which, like the economic depression and its effect on territorial finances, were unpredictable, extreme maldistribution arose in some parts of the Reserves. By 1941 more than half of the people within the Native Reserves of the four districts were living under conditions of more or less acute land shortage in relation to the land needs of their traditional systems, and very considerable areas were in process of rapid degeneration.

There is now little point in discussing whether or not the application of measures for agricultural improvement could have solved the problems of over-concentration without transfer of populations. In all probability no measure which would have been practicable could have met the case. The agriculture of a people can be rapidly developed only if three factors are present together; the means, the incentive and the will. Throughout the area we are discussing these factors were and for that matter still are, to a large extent absent. Except for local concentrations of cattle among the Ngoni, Chewa and eastern Senga, stock are lacking or negligible in numbers. The only implements are the hoe and the axe. A high proportion of the able bodied men are away at work, and the main source of income is from local employment by Europeans or the fraction of the wages of migrant labour which returns to the villages. With one or two local exceptions there are no cash crops sufficiently remunerative to compete with the attraction of the labour centres or to act as an incentive and provide the means for agricultural improvement. Nor was there any will to adopt new, incomprehensible and laborious methods while great areas of land, formerly in the possession of the people, remained empty and unused. This psychological factor alone would have defeated, and where it was attempted did defeat, all efforts at agricultural improvement. In addition, throughout most of the cattle areas of the Eastern Province population concentrations had reached such a level that even the immediate general adoption of an advanced system

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THE VILLAGE

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than either of these two drinks, and the drinking of it is essentially a social event. The kind of beer brewed is made from maize, sorghum, and finger millet. It is brewed by women, the process lasting about a week. The beer can be drunk at any time during the week, but it is not regarded as truly beer until after the brewing process has been completed. It remains good to drink for about three days, after which it becomes too sour. About 20 to 30 gallons of beer are brewed at a time. The beer can be sold, used to provide refreshment for participants in some ceremony or other, offered in return for labour or other services, or else just drunk for its own sake. In each case the presence of beer in the village acts as a magnet attracting people from other villages. Beer that is sold is of economic importance as it is the principal way in which women raise funds for themselves. In connexion with a ceremony of some kind, the attraction of the beer is secondary in general to that exerted by the ceremony itself. The provision of beer in return for utilitarian services we shall discuss later. It is in the pattern of behaviour adopted when beer is drunk for its own sake that we can see reflected the structure of social action at the village level. [424] [462] [796]

Beer is stored in earthenware jars of about 7 gallons capacity. A calabash-gourd cup is used to ladle the beer into earthenware bowls holding about 4 pints; from these the beer is drunk. When the beer is ready for drinking, the friendly fellow villagers of the man whose wife has brewed come to the beer-hut, which is usually the woman's kitchen, and the owner of the beer drinks the first jar with them. The procedure with each jar is that the owner of the beer gives the jar to someone, almost invariably a man, who becomes known as the divider of the beer, and who calls on someone junior to him to act as the dispenser of the beer. The dispenser sits on the ground and fills up the bowls from the jar under the instruction of the divider of the beer, and then takes them, or points them out to, the people to whom the divider wishes to give the beer. Thus the beer is given away in jars by the owner of the beer to the dividers of the beer, and is then divided into bowlfuls, and given by the dividers to yet other people. The owners of the bowlfuls drink some and pass on the bowls so that other people may drink. Each time these gifts of beer of different quantities are made they are acknowledged by the recipient in the form of a praise, consisting of the syllable *yo* followed by the descent-name of the giver. This is also done when a bowl or a jar is finished, so that when the last bowl of a jar is finished the owner of the bowl is praised, then the divider of the beer, and finally the owner of the beer. The [251] [415]